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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY  
MS. IULIA ZHDANOVA, HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN  
FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY SECURITY  
AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1133rd PLENARY MEETING OF THE  
OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

22 April 2026

**Agenda item: Any other business**

**Subject: Summing up the work of the Informal Working Group on the Structured  
Dialogue in 2025**

Mr. Chairperson,

We have carefully studied the report by the Norwegian Chairmanship of the Informal Working Group on the Structured Dialogue summing up its work in 2025 (CIO/GAL/25/26 of 27 March 2026). Russia's views on that document are reflected in a note verbale from the Delegation that was circulated at the OSCE today (PC.DEL/353/26 of 23 April 2026). However, as the report contains direct references to issues falling within the remit of the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC), we consider it of the utmost importance to draw the attention of the rotating FSC Chairmanships and the participating States to the following aspects.

The document in question corroborates the Norwegian Chairmanship's approach of steering the Structured Dialogue away from the original objectives set out in the OSCE Ministerial Council declaration adopted in Hamburg in 2016 (MC.DOC/4/16 of 9 December 2026) and entitled "From Lisbon to Hamburg: Declaration on the Twentieth Anniversary of the OSCE Framework for Arms Control", on the basis of which the Informal Working Group on the Structured Dialogue was established. In that declaration, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the 57 OSCE participating States committed themselves to working together "towards creating an environment conducive to reinvigorating conventional arms control and CSBMs [confidence- and security-building measures] in Europe". However, rather than assisting delegations in achieving this integral goal of the Structured Dialogue, the Norwegian Chairmanship is, in effect, putting the cart before the horse by initiating the discussion, within a non-inclusive "small group" format, of specific measures to update the OSCE's existing politico-military toolbox. The Chairmanship is thus not only openly working towards supplanting the intended purpose of the Structured Dialogue, but is also exacerbating the already deep divisions that hold sway at the OSCE among the participating States.

Following the "small-group" meetings, the Chairmanship of the Informal Working Group on the Structured Dialogue identified topics for consideration this year which formally fall solely within the FSC's mandate, leading to the conclusion that there has been an encroachment on the remit of that autonomous

OSCE decision-making body. We are referring to the resumption of dialogue on conventional arms control, modernization of the Vienna Document 2011 on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures, the exchange of military information, and the enhancement of information management and reporting programmes. And all this while the aforementioned topics are being systematically removed from the work programme of the FSC, which is now increasingly being used by Western delegations to conduct psy-ops and to censor political opponents, rather than for a professional conversation on issues relating to the Forum's politico-military mandate.

It is our conviction that the evisceration of the FSC and its working groups via informal "get-togethers" dominated by NATO approaches constitutes yet another destructive step aimed at further degrading its value as a dialogue platform.

We draw attention to this alarming trend, since the FSC's fate is in the hands of each of the 57 participating States. There comes a point when either all the delegations make a genuine effort to preserve the Forum's political and institutional foundations, or it will continue going downhill and get bogged down in shallow, "inter-dimensional" topics. We call upon the rotating FSC Chairmanships to pay the utmost attention to these trends and to prevent the Forum's functionality from being blunted in informal and non-consensus formats, which, at the present historical juncture, are embodied by "small groups".

We would also point out that the Norwegian Chairmanship's attempts to hold discussions on conventional arms control in Europe and CSBMs by artificially detaching these issues from their broader politico-military context simply make no sense from a practical point of view. Russia does not reject the idea of arms control as such and in principle, but we see no grounds for its realization outside the context of comprehensive efforts to reduce levels of conflict in the OSCE area.

The creation of new mechanisms for conventional arms control in Europe and CSBMs would only be possible if the West were to abandon its current destructive course aimed at undermining our national security, at confrontation with, and the inflicting of a "strategic defeat" on, Russia; if the West were to eschew its demonstrative disregard for the interests of our country and our allies. Moreover, any hypothetical discussions on this matter can only be holistic, with a focus on addressing key security issues, such as NATO's aggressive eastward expansion.

We continue to take the view that any understandings that may be reached in "small groups" without the full participation of all OSCE participating States will be inherently meaningless. We will not recognize them. As far as the Structured Dialogue is concerned, delegations' time, which could have been spent discussing practical measures to reduce military tensions, will once again be wasted this year. If and when the Informal Working Group meetings resume in the 57-State format, the discussions will have to start from scratch.

Thank you for your attention.